



CITY OF DECATUR ILLINOIS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 2, 2023

Council designates honorary streets, approves homebuyer counseling program

Decatur, IL – Highlights from the October 2, 2023, Decatur City Council meeting include the Council designating two honorary streets, and the approval of a counseling/education program for homebuyers.

Honorary Streets

On Monday night the Decatur City Council designated two honorary streets to honor influential Decatur families. The Council can make up to five honorary street designations each year and currently there are six honorary street designations. Requests are reviewed by a special committee before going in front of Council.

The 1000 block of South Webster Street will be designated to honor Jefferson & Booker Joyner. The two brothers lived next door to each other for over 50 years on Webster Street and their families have had a big impact on the community. Jefferson and his wife Catherine fostered many children over the years and that has trickled down with their own children doing the same. Booker Joyner coached the Stonettes and would load his pickup truck with neighborhood kids to take them to games. The families started a community garden which has fed the neighborhood for years and they operate over 30 properties with a goal of providing affordable housing to the community. To date, the Joyner family has four generations raised in Decatur.

The four street sections encompassing College Square where the Staley Museum is located will be designated the Staley Square. Were it not for A.E. Staley's vision, Decatur would look very different than it does today. He was a driving force behind the creation of Lake Decatur. There is no street for Staley in Decatur so the Council found it appropriate to designate Staley Square.

Homebuyer Counseling

Council also approved an agreement with the Community Investment Corporation of Decatur (CICD) to manage a homebuyer counseling/education program. Several housing analyses show that renters in Decatur are paying just as much to rent a home than if they had a mortgage and owned the home.

This partnership with CICD will assist residents with housing counseling, financial counseling and credit building, and property maintenance training. City staff will also be able to assist in distributing more down payment assistance for first-time home buyers. This program will create a pipeline of first-time homebuyers in Decatur that can take advantage of other City housing programs.

In other business

In other business...Paying food and beverage taxes will become easier for businesses in Decatur. Council approved an agreement with OpenGov Inc. to allow the submittal of payments and filing of tax forms online. Currently businesses are only able to mail them in or visit in person.

Finally, Council is continuing its support of housing rehabilitation projects by expanding access to loan programs. The City will work with Land of Lincoln Credit Union to allow all City housing rehabilitation programs to have access to the contractor's loan fund. This fund provides access to capital for small contractors which many not have the cash flow for payroll, materials, supplies, etc. for City-funded rehab projects.

More information about these topics can be found in the City Council Agenda packet, downloadable/viewable here: www.decaluril.gov/mayor-and-council/council-meetings/

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